

Message Text

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INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

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O R 091345Z SEP 75

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1108

INFO AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

USLO PEKING

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 NEW DELHI 12184

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PK, IN

SUBJECT: INDO-PAKISTAN RELATIONS

REF: A. NEW DELHI 11660 NOTAL

B. ISLAMABAD 8116 NOTAL

SUMMARY: IN A 90 MINUTE CONVERSATION ON SEPTEMBER 8 WITH VISIT-
ING NEA/INS DEPUTY BAZIL BROWN AND THE ACTING POLITICAL COUNSELOR,
MEA JOINT SECRETARY ASHOK CHIB ASSERTED THE SIMLA PROCESS CON-
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TINUES. HE IDENTIFIED SEVERAL VARIOUS AREAS OF GOI DISSATISFAC-

TION WITH PAKISTANI NEGATIVISM. HE SAID PEKING'S SUPPORT ENCOURAGES PAKISTANI INTRANSIGENCE, AND IDENTIFIED THE LIFTING OF THE US ARMS EMBARGO AND THE SITUATION IN BANGLADESH AS RELEVANT FACTORS. ALTHOUGH HE DENIED THE SIMLA PROCESS WAS STALLED, IT IS CLEAR THAT THE INDIAN POSITION IS LESS FLEXIBLE. THE CHINESE SICKNETRE PLAYS A STRONG ROLE IN INDIAN CALCULATIONS. WE SEE ONLY DIM PROSPECTS FOR SIGNIFICANT FORWARD MOVEMENT IN INDO-PAKISTAN RELATIONS. END SUMMARY.

1. GOI COMMITTED TO SIMLA: THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA REMAINS COMMITTED TO THE SIMLA PROCESS, WHICH IS NEITHER STALLED NOR AT DEAD CENTER THIS TIME. THE GOI HAS INDICATED IT WILL RECEIVE THE PAKISTAN EXPERTS CIRCA SEPTEMBER 10 TO CONTINUE DISCUSSIONS ON THE SALAL DAM. A NUMBER OF MESSAGES HAVE BEEN EXCHANGED ON THE NEXT ROUND OF CIVIL AIR TALKS BUT THE GOI SEES NO EVIDENCE OF A CHANGED PAKISTANI POSITION, NOR HAS THERE BEEN THE KIND OF PRELIMINARY WORK WHICH MUST PRECEDE ANOTHER ROUND OF TALKS. THERE ARE HOWEVER, CONTINUING EXCHANGES ON ALL OUTSTANDING ISSUES.

2. AREAS OF GOI DISSATISFACTION: THERE ARE SEVERAL AREAS OF GOI DISSATISFACTION: CHIB DESCRIBED THEM AT SOME LENGTH:

(A) PROPAGANDA: PAKISTAN STEPPED UP ITS ANTI-INDIAN PROPAGANDA IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE DECLARATION OF THE EMERGENCY. INDIA HAS NOT TAKEN ANY COMPARABLE ACTION BUT HAS SCRUPULOUSLY HELD TO THE AGREEMENT THAT THERE SHOULD BE NO HOSTILE PROPAGANDA BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. THE GOI DOES NOT UNDERSTAND WHY PAKISTAN HAS SEEN FIT TO LAUNCH THESE ATTACKS, THE LATEST FROM BHUTTO HIMSELF AS CARRIED IN THE AUGUST 30 ISSUE OF KARACHI DAWN. (ISLAMABAD 8095). THE GOI CAN ONLY SPECULATE THAT SOME OF THE IMPETUS AT LEAST COMES FROM CHINA. THESE PAKISTANI ATTACKS APPEAR NOT ONLY IN THE PRESS, THEY ARE CARRIED OUT BY PAKISTANI DIPLOMATS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD INCLUDING THE UNITED STATES.

B. TRAVEL: THE GOI ISSUES SOME 15 TO 500 VISAS TO PAKISTAN VISITORS EVERY WEEK. THERE IS NO EQUIVALENT RECIPROCITY FROM ISLAMABAD. IF FIGURES ARE COMPARED THE TOTALS MAY BE SIMILAR, BUT THIS IS ATTRIBUTABLE TO THE GROUP VISAS PAKISTAN ISSUES FOR THE SIKHS. MOREOVER, PAKISTAN NOW REQUIRES AN EXIT VISA
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FOR ITS CITIZENS WHO INTEND TO VISIT INDIA. PAKISTAN HAS ALSO RAISED THE VISA FEE TO RS.300 WHICH MAKES THE APPLICATION IMPOSSIBLE EXCEPT FOR A FEW OF THE RICH.

C. TRADE: IN THE NEGOTIATIONS THE GOI ADVOCATED BOTH GOVERNMENT'S APPROVAL PROCEDURES WHEREBY PRIVATE TRADERS COULD ENTER INTO NORMAL COMMERCIAL RELATIONSHIPS, PAKISTAN HOWEVER ASKED THAT TRADE BE KEPT ON A GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT BASIS.

THE GOI SOMEWHAT RELUCTANTLY AGREED SINCE THERE WAS NO POINT IN STRIVING FOR A TRADE RELATIONSHIP WHICH WAS NOT ACCEPTABLE TO BOTH PARTIES. IN PRACTICE THERE HAS NOT BEEN MUCH PROGRESS. THE GOI PURCHASED 20,000 BALES OF COTTON AND OFFERED A 50-50 SHIPPING ARRANGEMENT SO THAT THE COTTON WOULD NOT ALL BE CARRIED IN INDIAN BOTTOMS. A PAKISTAN TRADE MISSION WHICH TOURED INDIA EARLY THIS YEAR INSPECTED MACHINE, TOOL, ELECTRONICS, AND TRACTOR FACTORIES. "WE SHOWED THEM EVERYTHING THEY WANTED TO SEE," BUT THERE HAS BEEN NO OVERTURE FROM THE PAKISTAN SIDE. THIS IS ALL THE MORE DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND SINCE THE TRADE DELEGATION WAS VERY ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT A NUMBER OF INDIAN PRODUCTS WHICH THEY COULD OBTAIN FROM INDIA CHEAPER THAN THEY COULD ANYWHERE ELSE. THE GOI CAN ONLY CONCLUDE THERE ARE POLITICAL REASONS INHIBITING TRADE. THERE ARE OTHER COMMERCIAL AREAS WHERE PAKISTAN WOULD STAND TO BENEFIT WERE IT NOT SO MISTRUSTFUL. THE GOI, DIR EXAMPLE, SEES NO REASON WHY AFGHAN TRUCKERS SHOULD NOT RETURN WITH FULL LOADS INSTEAD OF EMPTY VEHICLES AFTER DELIVERING FRUIT TO INDIA.

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D. MILITARY: PAKISTAN HAS ALWAYS CONTENDED THERE SHOULD BE PARITY BETWEEN THE ARMED FORCES OF THE TWO COUNTRIES. INDIA'S DEFENSE REQUIREMENTS ARE FAR MORE EXTENSIVE THAN PAKISTAN'S. A SOPHISTICATED COUNTRY SUCH AS THE US REALIZES THE 1500 MILE BORDER WITH CHINA DEMANDS THE BULK OF THE INDIAN ARMED FORCES BE POSITIONED ON THE NORTHERN FRONT. IN FACT THERE IS RELATIVE PARITY BETWEEN THE PAKISTAN AND INDIAN FORCES ON INDIA'S NORTHWEST FRONTIER. THAT FRONTIER HAS BEEN RELATIVELY STABLE SINCE SIMLA. PAKISTAN, WHICH HOPES TO OBTAIN FINANCIAL SUPPORT FROM THE OIL-RICH ARAB NATIONS, ARGUES IN THOSE COUNTRIES THAT THE INDIAN MILITARY OUTNUMBERS PAKISTAN THREE TO ONE.
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3. RATIONALE: THE GOI BELIEVES THERE ARE SOME EXPLANATIONS FOR THE RECENT PAKISTANI ACTIVITY WHICH HAS ADMITTEDLY HAD A NEGATIVE INFLUENCE ON THE SIMLA PROCESS. THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT THE CHINESE HAVE BEEN ACTIVE IN ISLAMABAD. PEKING'S SUPPORT ENCOURAGES PAKISTANI INTRANSIGENCE. ANOTHER CONTRIBUTING FACTOR WAS THE LIFTING BY THE US OF THE ARMS EMBARGO. THAT STEP REPRESENTS POLITICAL VICTORY FOR BHUTTO WHETHER OR NOT HE EVER RECEIVES A SINGLE WEAPON. THE BANGLADESH FACTOR ALSO FIGURES IN THE EQUATION. THE GOI HAS ALWAYS PLAYED A CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE IN BANGLADESH-PAKISTAN RELATIONS. NEW DELHI HAS NO OBJECTIONS TO GOOD RELATIONS BETWEEN PAKISTAN AND BANGLADESH. SUCH TIES ARE NECESSARY FOR STABILITY IN SOUTH ASIA, BUT THE GOI IS CONCERNED THERE BE NO SINO-PAKISTANI COLLUSION IN DACCA TO VICTIMIZE INDIA. ANY ACTION WHICH WOULD ENCOURAGE A THEOCRATIC STATE IN BANGLADESH WOULD BE A VERY SERIOUS MATTER. ANY ACTION IN DACCA WHICH WOULD LEAD TO THE FLIGHT OF THE 10,000,000 HINDUS CITIZENS OF BANGLADESH WOULD BE "UNACCEPTABLE" TO THE GOI.

4. COMMENT: CHIB TOOK PAINS TO PUT THE BEST POSSIBLE FACE ON THE INDIAN POSITION. GOI MISTRUST OF PEKING, AND FEARS OF CHINESE AND PAKISTANI COLLUSION IN DACCA ARE SALIENT FACTORS IN PRESENT INDO-PAKISTAN RELATIONS. CHIB WAS CAREFUL TO REPEAT HIS EARLIER ASSERTION THAT EVENTS IN BANGLADESH SHOULD NOT HAVE ANY AFFECT ON INDO-PAKISTAN RELATIONS, BUT THE SUSPICION THAT PAKISTAN BACKED BY CHICA MAY UPSET THE SECULAR NATURE OF THE STATE OF BANGLADESH IS STRONG. IT IS EQUALLY CLEAR THAT THE INDIANS ARE IRRITATED BY WHAT THEY BELIEVE IS A GRATUITOUS PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED BY PAKISTAN IN THE WAKE OF THE GOI INTERNAL EMERGENCY. CHIB IDENTIFIED IT AS A NEGATIVE INFLUENCE ON THE SIMLA PROCESS. HIS CONCERN

FOR BHUTTO'S FUND RAISING EFFORTS FOR ARMS AMONG THE OIL-RICH ARAB STATES WAS ALSO APPARENT. HE SOFT-PEDALLED HIS REFERENCE TO THE LIFTING OF THE US ARMS EMBARGO, BUT THAT REMAINS A FACTOR IN THE INDIAN ASSESSMENT OF PAKISTANI POLICY. WE CAN HARDLY AGREE WITH CHIB'S ASSERTION THAT THE SIMLA PROCESS IS NOT STALLED NOR AT DEAD CENTER. THE PROCESS IS CERTAINLY INHIBITED. WE SEE ONLY DIM PROSPECTS FOR ANY SIGNIFICANT MOVEMENT IN THE NEAR TERM. END COMMENT.

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